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AMB

REPORT CLASS
COUNTRY: SOUTH VIETNAM
SUBJECT: SITUATION REPORT ON QUANG TRI PROVINCE AS OF 0700 ON 1 FEBRUARY

ACQ: VIETNAM, DANANG (1 FEBRUARY 1968)
SOURCE: THIS IS A SITUATION REPORT ON 1 FEBRUARY PREPARED BY CAS,

1. QUANG TRI PROVINCE HAS MUDDLED THROUGH TWO NIGHTS AND ONE DAY OF "THE OFFENSIVE." SOMEHOW WE HAVE ESCAPED SERIOUS FAILURE AND DEFEAT. THAT IS NOT TO SAY, HOWEVER, THAT WE ARE OUT OF THE WOODS YET. THE ENEMY, VIET CONG (VC), HAS PLENTY OF MUSCLE; BUT HE HAS GIVEN US TIME TO GET SET, TO PLUG THE GAPS IN OUR DEFENSIVE LINEUPS, AND TO CORRECT SOME OF OUR GRIEVOUS WAYS.

2. THE VC OFFENSIVE IN QUANG TRI PROVINCE DEVELOPED EXACTLY AS AMERICAN ADVISORS PREDICTED IN THREE PHASES: INTERDICT LINES OF COMMUNICATIONS (PARTLY SUCCESSFUL); NEUTRALIZE U.S. COMBAT BASES (TOTALLY UNSUCCESSFUL); AND THEN ATTACK VIETNAMESE CENTERS

58

NND 941536 --- 67

Approved for Release: 2019/01/17 C00198084

Approved for Release: 2019/01/17 C00198084

OF AUTHORITY THROUGH THE PACIFIED AREAS (SO FAR UNSUCCESSFUL).

A. SIX NORTH VIETNAM ARMY (NVA) OFFICERS, MOSTLY LIEUTENANTS, WERE EITHER KILLED OR CAPTURED IN THE 30 DAYS PRECEDING THE LAUNCHING OF PHASE III WHILE ON RECONNAISSANCE MISSIONS IN THE PACIFIED AREAS. THEY HAD DETAILED MAPS OF PHASE III II AND I TARGETS.

B. FORWARD STOCKPILING OF WEAPONS, AMMUNITION AND RICE WAS DETECTED DURING THE PRECEDING 60 DAYS.

C. AGENT REPORTS, POW INTERROGATIONS, AND CHIEU HOI STATEMENTS CONSISTENTLY STATED THAT THE ENEMY PLANNED TO TAKE AND OCCUPY QUANG TRI CITY.

D. THE HUGE TROOP MOVEMENTS DETECTED BY ALL SOURCES WERE HIGHLY SIGNIFICANT, BOTH NORTH TO SOUTH AND WEST TO EAST. A SIMPLE PROJECTION OF THE ROUTE LED THEM CONVERGING ON QUANG TRI, DONG HA, TRIEU PHONG.

E. JUST BEFORE THE BIG ATTACK BEGAN ALLIES OBTAINED LARGE STACKS OF PROPAGANDA MATERIAL AND NATIONAL FRONT FOR THE LIBERATION OF SOUTH VIETNAM (NFLSV) FLAGS. THE STUFF WAS NOT UNUSUAL IN CONTENT, JUST IN QUANTITY. APPARENTLY THIS ATTACK IN THE MINDS OF THE LEADERS IN HANOI WAS TO BE MORE OF AN "ANCHLUSS THAN A BATTLE FOR WARSAW."

NND 941536 --- 68

Approved for Release: 2019/01/17 C00198084

Approved for Release: 2019/01/17 C00198084

3. THE ENEMY SEEMS TO HAVE BEEN EXPECTING MORE THAN HE ACCOMPLISHED. APPARENTLY HE FAILED (SO FAR) BECAUSE HE MIS-CALCULATED THE U.S. AIR SUPERIORITY AND ALL THAT THAT SUPER-IORITY MEANS WHEN EMPLOYED MASSIVLEY AND BECAUSE HE EXPECTED MORE SUPPORT FROM THE PEOPLE. INSTEAD OF PLAYING DOGGO OR JOINING HIS STEAMROLLER, THE PEOPLE VOTED WITH THEIR FEET. QUANG TRI CITY'S POPULATION HAS TRIPLED OR QUADRUPLED IN THE LAST 48 HOURS. ORDINARY PEOPLE HAVE BEEN SUPPLYING ACCURATE INFORMATION ON ENEMY LOCATIONS AND THERE HAS BEEN NO PANIC.

4. THE TIME OF ATTACK, 0400 31 JANUARY, LEADS A/CAS OBSERVER BELIEVE THE ENEMY WANTED TO STAGE A COUP. WHEN PEOPLE WOKE UP THEY WOULD FIND A NEW FLAG FLYING. VC CADRE WOULD BE EVERYWHERE HANDING OUT LEAFLETS, BROADCASTING TO THE PEOPLE. ALL THE VC HAD TO DO WAS TO SEIZE THE CITADEL. BUT THAT WAS A TALL ORDER. PROBABLY A FULL REGIMENT WAS EMPLOYED ON THE ATTACK WITH ADDITIONAL SPECIAL ACTION SQUADS TO BREACH THE WALLS OF THE CITADEL. ONE BATTALION COMING FROM THE NORTH WAS DELAYED IN IRI BUU HAMLET BY ARVN AIRBORNE. SAPPERS GOT THROUGH INTO THE CITY, 24 WERE KILLED BY APCS, PRU'S, HUNG GUARDS AND TWO BY LOUIS BALIGNASAY - A GRENADE THROWING CHIEU HOI ADVISOR.

NND 941536 --- 69

Approved for Release: 2019/01/17 C00198084

Approved for Release: 2019/01/17 C00198084

SOME OF THEM WERE CARRYING BIG SATCHEL CHARGES AND LADDERS BUT THEY SEEMD AT A LOSS WHERE TO USE THEM. TWO BATTALIONS TANGLED WITH THE ARVN AND U.S. TROOPS AT LA VANG BUT THEY GOT NOWHERE AND SUFFERED MORE THAN 100 KIA. REMNANTS OF THESE TWO FORCES TOOK REFUGE IN THE SUBURBS OF THE CITY NORTH AND SOUTH. SOME ARE STILL THERE AND ONE REPORT HAS IT THAT A GENERAL YE (PHONETIC) IS WITH THEM AT APPROXIMATELY YD 345513. AN ENEMY STRONG POINT HAS HELD OUT IN THIS VICINITY FOR 36 HOURS. THE ENEMY ALSO DUG IN IN TRI BUU HAMLET TO THE NORTH OF THE CITY. AS A RESULT THE HAMLET SEEMS TO HAVE BEEN DESTROYED IN THE FIGHTING DURING THE NIGHT OF 31 JANUARY.

5. PROVINCE CHIEF LIEUTENANT COLONEL PHAM AM HAS BEEN IN A FUNK. NO DECISIONS WERE MADE BY HIM. FEW OF THE SECTOR OFFICERS HAVE BEEN ON THE BALL. BUT ALL THE BATTALION COMMANDERS HAVE BEEN GREAT. COL. SNAPPER RATTAN, 1 BDE CMDR, OF 1ST AIR CAV HAS BEEN A PRINCE. US MACV DID A GOOD JOB OF DEFENDING THEIR COMPOUND. THEY HAD TWO KIA AND FOUR WIA. (DON'T KNOW IF THEY SUFFERED CASUALTIES THIS SECOND NIGHT NOW ENDING.) NO U.S. CIVILIAN OR THIRD COUNTRY CASUALTIES.

6. FIELD DISSEM: STATE MACV III MAF CORDS.

REPORT CLASS [redacted] (b1)

GP-1

NND 941536 --- 70

Approved for Release: 2019/01/17 C00198084